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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/796,254	03/09/2004	Kenji Sanada	4296-172 US	2390

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EXAMINER

ZUCKER, PAUL A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1621

DATE MAILED: 08/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/796,254	Applicant(s) SANADA ET AL.	
	Examiner Paul A. Zucker	Art Unit 1621	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 March 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/4/2004</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 2-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 2 recites the limitation "the stop of the operation is effected by" in lines 1-3. Claim 2 however does not set forth a step that causes the operation to stop only steps for determining whether the operation should be stopped. Claim 2 and its dependents are therefore rendered indefinite

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35

U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

3. Claims 1- 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller et al (JP 2001-114706 05-2001).

Instantly claimed is a method for managing the operation of an apparatus for the reaction of gas phase oxidation while the apparatus is in trouble, characterized by stopping the operation of said apparatus exclusively when the value of the concentration of a gas obtained by calculation based on the flow rate of the gas at the inlet port of the relevant reactor and the value measured by analysis with a gas analyzing instrument both deviate from the relevant preset ranges.

Miller teaches (Machine translation, paragraphs [0017]-[0024]) a process for the oxidation of hydrocarbons such as propene and butane, in the presence of oxygen, to corresponding oxidized products such as maleic anhydride and acrylonitrile. Miller teaches (Machine translation, paragraph [0024]) the co-production of acrylic acid and acrylonitrile. Miller teaches (Machine translation, paragraphs [0025]-[0031]) control of the input of the raw material hydrocarbon and oxygen gases using flow detection as well as the use of oxygen density sensors in the reactor outflow.

The difference between the process instantly claimed and that taught by Miller is that in the instantly claimed process the decision to stop a reaction is based on the data from both input and output sensors while Miller is silent with regard to stopping the reaction.

Miller, however, teaches that the reactor effluent gas is partitioned and separated, and un-oxidized hydrocarbon is recycled to the input gas stream. Thus any decision to stop the reaction based upon the output of the reactor necessarily involves the consideration of both input and output sensor data since they are linked through a recycle loop. The Examiner also notes that the principal advantage of the process as taught (Machine translation, Abstract) by Miller is that stable (i.e. trouble free) operation is achieved by monitoring and controlling both input and output streams.

Thus one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated by the teaching of Miller to produce the instant process since Miller teaches that stable, trouble-free oxidations can be performed thereby. There would also therefore have been a reasonable expectation for success.

Thus the instantly claimed process would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Conclusion


4. Claims 1-7 are pending. Claims 1-7 are rejected.

Art Unit: 1621

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul A. Zucker whose telephone number is 571-272-0650. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 5:30-2:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Johann R. Richter can be reached on 571-272-0646. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



PAUL A. ZUCKER, PH.D.
PRIMARY EXAMINER